



# MINNESOTA YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CLOCK

# 2013



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
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# MINNESOTA YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CLOCK

## Overview

The Minnesota Youth Development Clock is a model which depicts youth development on a 24 hour clock as children progress from infancy into early adulthood. Each hour on the clock corresponds to one year of growth and maturation. While traditional definitions of youth end at legal adulthood (typically 18 years of age), this model extends the scope of youth to age 24 consistent with emerging research on human brain development.

The clock model is designed to integrate youth developmental theory with youth policy. Many statutes and guidelines pertaining to youth in Minnesota contain specific age provisions including laws related to education, child protection, juvenile justice, employment and civic participation. Laws governing youth are potentially made without regard to one another or without specific analysis to their developmental appropriateness. This model allows for examination of policies across different youth serving systems to assess whether they are congruent with one another, as well as if they are appropriate given what is known about youth development.

## Project Background

The Minnesota Youth Development Clock is the product of a collaboration among the Minnesota Council of Foundations' Youth Funders Network, *Youthprise* of Minneapolis and the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Justice Programs.

The Minnesota Council of Foundations (MCF) is a collaboration of private family and independent foundations, community and public foundations, and corporate foundations and giving programs that work collectively to expand and strengthen a community of diverse grantmakers.<sup>1</sup> The Youth Funders Network is comprised of MCF members that fund out-of-school time and other youth programs. The Youth Funders Network gathers to discuss youth programming and practice with the aim of furthering effective, quality youth programming in Minnesota through grantmaking.<sup>2</sup>

In 2012, the Youth Funders Network launched "Learning Labs on Collective Impact" where private and public funders of Minnesota youth programming came together in small groups with the following goals: to build a community of practice; to build intellectual and social capital; to explore research related to youth programming; and to advance the collective impact of diverse enterprises committed to developing healthy, high-achieving youth.<sup>3</sup>

Ultimately two learning lab groups were created. One learning lab group focused on obstacles to funder collaboration (not included in this report), while the other elected to focus on the collateral consequences for youth when they fail to meet "typical" developmental benchmarks and social expectations. The Minnesota Youth Development Clock arose out of the *Collateral Consequences Workgroup*.

## Goals of the Minnesota Youth Development Clock

The Minnesota Youth Development Clock was developed as a model to map benchmarks and social expectations as youth age into adulthood. The clock model was developed as a way to illustrate and emphasize the following:

- Research on adolescent development support that the human brain does not reach full development and decision-making capacity until approximately 25 years old. In recognition of this, one goal of the clock model was to depict youth as lasting from birth through as 24.
- Over the course of 24 years, children, youth and young adults constantly grow and develop. The use of clock imagery (rather than a linear depiction of time) is to emphasize a continuous process. One cannot stop time for those who do not meet biological or socially imposed developmental milestones. If a child cannot read by the time one's peers can read, for example, that youth will fall progressively further behind if there is no support or intervention.
- State statutes and rules impose many rights, responsibilities and restrictions on persons under age 24. The clock model allows these rules to be viewed in relationship to one another. This allows for assessment of whether the age provisions of one state system, such as education, align with the age provisions of other systems such as juvenile justice or employment law.
- Many developmental theories exist which inform and enhance each other. A goal of the clock model is to view these theories in relationship to one another.

## Reading the Clock

This report includes two developmental clock models: One which describes dominant theories of child cognitive, psychosocial and moral development; and another which maps laws and rules pertaining to youth in Minnesota.

Both models are read as a clock: starting from the vertical axis, clockwise to the right. The clock begins at 00:00 hours (birth) and ends back at the vertical axis at 24:00 hours (24 years old). For ease of interpretation and discussion, the developmental clock has been divided into four quadrants: *Infancy and Early Childhood*, *Middle Childhood*, *Adolescence* and *Early Adulthood*.

## CLOCK 1: YOUTH DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

Sociologists, psychologists and other behaviorists have long been studying the developmental process by which children transition into adulthood. Generally, child development describes how a child becomes able to do more complex things as they become older. Included in discussions about child development are gross motor skills, fine motor skills, language and communication skills, cognitive skills, social skills, and emotional and moral development.<sup>4</sup>

Through research, several dominant developmental theories have emerged. The first clock model (page 6) illustrates the developmental stages and tasks defined by Jean Piaget (cognitive theory), Erik Erickson (psychosocial theory), Lawrence Kohlberg (moral development) and Robert Havighurst (developmental tasks). These developmental models provide information as to the level of cognitive, social, emotional and moral functioning that are observed in youth who following a typical developmental trajectory.

The developmental stages depicted are not exact, rather they represent the lowest and highest ages at which the developmental stages are typically observed. Physical, cognitive and social-emotional development can be affected by physical and mental characteristics and disabilities, as well as exposure to trauma or neglect.

A commonality among developmental models is that youth must pass through each stage in sequence in order to reach the next stage of development. It is not possible to skip over any stages. Transitions into and out of some stages are marked by developmental milestones which are a set of functional skills or age-specific tasks that most children can do at a certain age. Every child, however, is unique as to when milestones are reached.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, the Minnesota Youth Development Clock illustrates only stages occurring before age 24. Erickson, Kohlberg and Havighurst all have additional developmental stages in later adulthood which are not depicted in this model.

## Clock 1: Youth Developmental Stages

### Developmental Tasks of Early Adulthood: 19 to 29

1. Selecting a mate
2. Achieving a masculine or feminine social role
3. Learning to live with a marriage partner
4. Starting a family
5. Rearing children
6. Managing a home
7. Getting started in an occupation
8. Taking on civic responsibility
9. Finding a congenial social group

### Developmental Tasks of Adolescence: 13 to 18

1. Achieving new and more mature relations with age mates of both sexes
2. Achieving a masculine or feminine social role
3. Accepting one's physique and using the body effectively
4. Emotional independence from parents and other adults
5. Preparing for marriage and family life
6. Selecting and preparing for an occupation
7. Acquiring a set of values and an ethical system to guide behavior; developing an ideology
8. Developing intellectual skills and concepts necessary for civic competence
9. Desiring and achieving socially responsible behavior

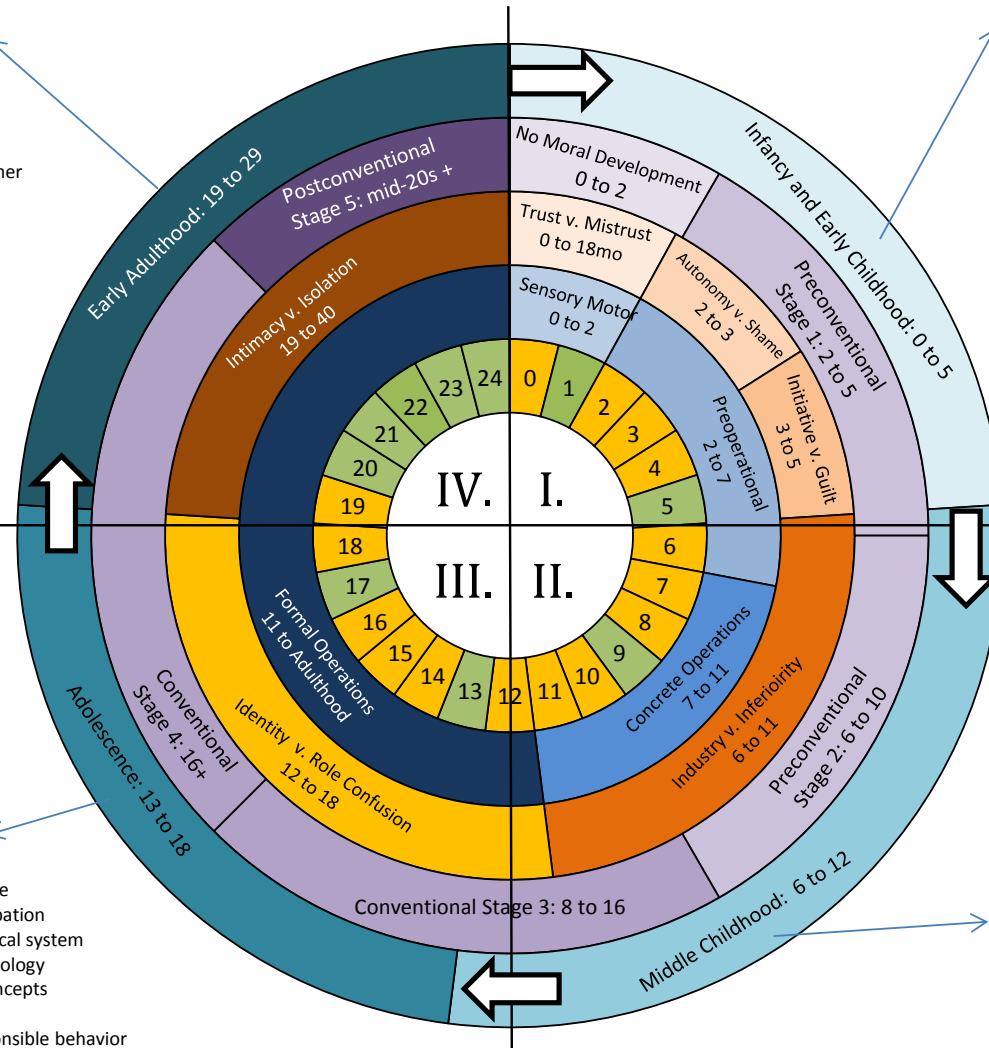
### Developmental Tasks of Infancy and Early Childhood: Birth to 5

1. Learning to walk
2. Learning to talk
3. Learning to take solid foods
4. Learning to control elimination of body wastes
5. Learning difference between sexes and sexual modesty
6. Getting ready to read
7. Forming concepts and learning language to describe social and physical reality
8. Learning to relate oneself emotionally to parents, siblings and others
9. Learning to distinguish right from wrong; developing a conscience

### Developmental Tasks of Middle Childhood: 6 to 12

1. Learning physical skills necessary for ordinary games
2. Building wholesome attitudes towards oneself as a growing organism
3. Learning to get along with age mates
4. Learning an appropriate sex role (male/female)
5. Developing fundamental skills in reading, writing and calculating
6. Developing concepts necessary for everyday living
7. Developing a conscience, morality and a scale of values
8. Developing attitudes toward social groups and institutions
9. Achieving personal independence

**Rings: Innermost to Outermost:**  
**(1) Age and Brain Development; (2) Piaget's Cognitive Development; (3) Erikson's Psychosocial Development;**  
**(4) Kohlberg's Moral Development; (5) Havinghurst's Developmental Tasks.**



The following sections will briefly describe the four quadrants of *Clock 1: Youth Development Stages*. Note that these are brief synopses of the cognitive, social, emotional, moral and physical development of youth to serve as a foundation for discussion. Extensive research exists that delves into the specific aspects of each developmental stage.

## Quadrant I: Infancy and Early Childhood (0-5)

**Developmental Tasks:** The first quadrant, *Infancy and Early Childhood*, captures the development of youth from birth through age 5. According to Havighurst, developmental tasks of this age range include learning to walk, talk, eat solid foods and control bodily functions. As youth age, they develop an understanding of language; the differences between the two sexes; and how to relate to others. Children in early childhood will also be getting ready to read and begin distinguishing right from wrong.<sup>6</sup>

**Physical Development/Brain Development:** Physically, infants are growing rapidly in size and are learning to balance their head, sit up, crawl, stand and eventually walk. Much sensory input is desired as small children touch, probe and grasp with their fingers and put most things in their mouths.<sup>7</sup>

Children between the ages of 2 and 6 are typically very active. There is rapid muscle growth and children of this age are learning large muscle coordination and fine motor skills.<sup>8</sup> Children will begin to run, jump, climb and ride tricycles. By the end of *Early Childhood* children are typically toilet trained and able to feed and dress themselves.<sup>9</sup> They may still be clumsy with lots of spills and physical accidents as they practice control over their bodies. It is also common for youth in this developmental stage to be curious about their bodies and the bodies of the opposite sex.<sup>10</sup>

In the first year of life there is rapid growth in the size, weight and grey matter of the brain. Grey matter is where processing occurs. Brain growth then slows until about age 2 while the brain practices and learns control over the body. Another burst of brain growth occurs between ages 2 and 4 as the senses mature (smell, vision and hearing) and the brain becomes capable of language and the use of thoughts and words. Brain growth slows again between 4 and 6 as the brain practices and hones its sensory motor skills.<sup>11</sup>

**Cognition:** Piaget identifies two stages of development in *Infancy and Early Childhood*. The first is the *Sensory Motor Stage* during which infants from birth to age 2 use their body to make sense of their environment. Infants learn to differentiate themselves from other objects and distinguish between animate and inanimate objects.<sup>12</sup> At this stage infants learn *object permanency*, which is a cognitive milestone where infants understand that an object still exists even if it is hidden from view.<sup>13</sup>

As a child moves into his or her second year of life, cognitive development shifts into the *Preoperational Stage*. During the time from age 2 to age 7 children are learning the use of language to represent objects through images and words.<sup>14</sup> Youth ages 4 to 5 are typically observed to have a vocabulary of 1500 to 2000 words, speak in full sentences and know their colors, numbers, and begin to copy letters.<sup>15</sup> Cognitive activities of youth of this age include grouping and classifying objects. Children in this age group also use imaginative play and role-playing games to imitate the activities of adults.<sup>16</sup>

Children in the *Preoperational Stage* of cognition are also observed to be very egocentric. Research trials illustrate that youth of this age do not possess the ability to see the perspective of others well or to understand hypothetical scenarios.<sup>17</sup>

*Psychosocial:* Erickson identifies three stages of psychosocial development occurring in *Infancy* and *Early Childhood*. Infants from birth to about 18 months are in the stage of *Trust vs. Mistrust*. During this time infants develop a sense of trust when caregivers provide reliability, care and affection; mistrust develops if caregivers are inconsistent in meeting the basic needs of an infant.<sup>18</sup>

Attachment Theory (Bowlby and Ainsworth) supports that the first years of life are crucial to forming a healthy, *secure attachment* to a caregiver and providing young children with a secure emotional base to return to when they experience fear or anxiety. If a caregiver does not provide the emotional support infants and toddlers need, they are at risk of *anxious attachment*, *ambivalent attachment* and *disorganized attachment* which can negatively impact behavior and social relationships into adulthood. It is common for young children to experience separation anxiety when separated from their primary caregivers, and to be fearful of strangers.<sup>19</sup>

Erickson observed that children enter the second psychosocial stage, *Autonomy vs. Shame*, between the ages of 2 and 3 or when children are toddlers. During this time, toilet training and mastering control over the body are the most important tasks. Youth who master these personal control skills feel capable and autonomous whereas those who do not will internalize shame. Children are striving to establish autonomy and independence as they explore the world but also require boundaries and consistent limits from caregivers.<sup>20</sup>

Finally, between 3 and 5 years old, Erickson observed that children move into a stage of avid curiosity and enthusiasm. This stage, termed *Initiative vs. Guilt*, is one in which young children begin to assert power and control over their environment. Success at this stage leads to a sense of purpose whereas children who try to assert too much power experience disapproval from adults resulting in guilt.<sup>21</sup>

*Moral Development:* Kohlberg's research suggests that children between birth and age 2 do not experience moral development. Between ages 2 and 5, children are in the first stage of *Preconventional* morality. During this time, a child's behavior is guided by the respect for power and punishment. A young child decides what to do based upon what they can get them in trouble. The desire to do good is driven by the desire to avoid punishment.<sup>22</sup>

Children in this developmental stage will tell many untruths and, when confronted about poor behavior will deny it or blame their behavior on others.<sup>23</sup> Young children will also use verbal threats such as "I'll kill you" without understanding the implications.<sup>24</sup> While viewed as undesirable traits by adults, these are widespread, developmentally appropriate stages for young children to pass through.



## Quadrant II: Middle Childhood (6-12)

**Developmental Tasks:** Havighurst designates the ages from 6 to 12 years old as *Middle Childhood*. During this time, the developmental tasks for youth are learning physical skills needed for games, learning basic skills in reading, writing and computation, and developing basic concepts needed for everyday living. Youth of this age are building positive attitudes about themselves, learning to interact with age-mates and social institutions, and further learning male and female roles. Youth in this stage are also learning personal independence and developing a conscience and a scale of values.<sup>25</sup>

**Physical Development/Brain Development:** In *Middle Childhood*, youth make major gains in muscle strength and coordination. Youth in this age group often become interested in sports, team games, clubs and competition with peers. Youth may also become interested in drawing, printing or instruments showing mastery over fine motor skills.<sup>26</sup>

In the latter half of *Middle Childhood* (10 to 11 years old) most youth have entered puberty. This is a time accompanied by growth spurts for both boys and girls, as well as the development of secondary sex characteristics including breast buds, growth of the penis and testicles, and appearance of pubic and underarm hair. Girls typically enter puberty earlier and mature faster than boys.<sup>27</sup>

Several stages of brain development occur during *Middle Childhood*. The first occurs from 6 to 8 years old and usually corresponds with the transition to concrete cognitive operations (see *Cognition*). During this time connections are made between sensory motor functions and mental functions.<sup>28</sup>

It was previously thought that the only growth of grey matter occurred during infancy, but brain imaging has shown that between 10 and 12 another stage of brain growth occurs that rivals the amount of brain growth occurring in infancy.<sup>29</sup> The increase in brain weight is caused by stronger brain connections that allow for more formal, abstract reasoning. These changes occur at about the same time as puberty begins. Grey matter in the brain peaks around age 12 and declines thereafter.<sup>30</sup>

**Cognition:** During *Middle Childhood*, Piaget observed the emergence of *Concrete Operations* typically around age 7. During the *Concrete Operations* stage, youth can think logically about concrete events but have difficulty understanding abstract or hypothetical concepts. At this stage youth develop inductive logic but struggle with deductive logic; they also develop the concept of *reversibility* such that they can recognize that their dog is a poodle and a poodle is a dog or that  $2+2 = 4$  and  $4-2 = 2$ .<sup>31</sup>

During *Concrete Operations*, the cognitive milestone of *conservation* appears. In conservation tests, the same volume of liquid is poured into different shaped glasses. A child in the *Concrete Operations* stage can understand that the volume of liquid did not change just because the shape of the vessel changed. Soon after comes *number conservation* where a child will know that rearranging cookies on a plate, for example, does not change the number of cookies.<sup>32</sup>

*Concrete Operations* also is accompanied by a decrease in egocentrism.<sup>33</sup> Children in this stage can begin to articulate what people other than themselves might see or think if they are presented with a concrete scenario; they will still struggle with hypothetical scenarios, however. The *Concrete Operations* stage typically lasts through age 11. Between ages 10 and 11 a youth can accurately recognize and consider other's viewpoints.<sup>34</sup> In the later years of *Middle Childhood*, youth may enjoy having discussions and trying to challenge adult reasoning and intelligence to practice their cognitive skills.

*Psychosocial Development:* According to Erickson, youth in *Middle Childhood* move into a new stage of psychosocial development: *Industry vs. Inferiority*. As children begin formal schooling they are faced with new social and academic demands. Success in these arenas leads to a sense of competency whereas failure leads to feelings of inferiority. Play often involves teams and competitions in organized sports and games as children attempt to learn their place among peers rather than among adults.<sup>35</sup>

Youth in this stage of development typically develop a longer attention span and are curious and eager to learn. Individual differences between children may become more pronounced as they develop likes and dislikes. Children in this age group like to collect things and engage in hobbies and fads, but may have many interests of short duration. By the later stages of *Middle Childhood* youth may have specific talents emerging but are often self-critical of their own art, grades or abilities.<sup>36</sup>

*Moral Development:* At the beginning of *Middle Childhood*, youth also move into a new stage of Kohlberg's moral development. In this 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of *Preconventional* development, youth may show disrespect for the rights of others or may engage in quid pro quo. A child in this stage of moral development may do something nice or helpful for someone else with the belief that they will get something good in return. Their actions are not motivated by gratitude, justice or loyalty, rather by self-interest.<sup>37</sup>

Near the end of *Middle Childhood*, youth typically transition into the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of *Conventional* morality. This stage of morality is defined as the "Good Boy" or "Good Girl" stage where a youth shifts from what is pleasing to do for themselves to what is pleasing for important others such as parents, teachers or friends. Youth of this age are approval seeking and seek to conform to other's expectations.<sup>38</sup>

Children in *Middle Childhood* are typically very concerned with the concept of fairness and equality. Children still may have difficulty admitting mistakes but are typically learning to accept failures and to take responsibility for them.<sup>39</sup> Youth of this age often have a strict moral code and pay more attention to what is wrong than what is right.<sup>40</sup> There is a strong desire to conform to peer-group morals. By the end of *Middle Childhood* (age 12) children typically know right from wrong. These youth try to make decisions by weighing alternatives.<sup>41</sup>

## Quadrant III: Adolescence (13-18)

*Developmental Tasks:* As youth move through *Adolescence* (ages 13 to 18) key developmental tasks are related to establishing emotional independence from caregivers; achieving new and more mature relations with peers of both sexes; developing the intellectual skills and concepts needed for civic participation and acquiring a set of values and an ethical system to guide their behavior. According to Havighurst, youth in this stage of development are beginning to prepare for an occupation and family life.<sup>42</sup>

*Physical Development/Brain Development:* During *Adolescence*, youth continue their growth towards physical maturation. Girls will undergo menarche and boys, spermatarche, signaling sexual maturity. Most youth will achieve their adult height, though males may continue to grow into early adulthood.<sup>43</sup> Fluctuations in weight and strength are not uncommon, nor are voracious appetites and the need for more sleep. Biological sleep patterns shift in *Adolescence* such that teens will stay up later and want to sleep in later than when they were children.<sup>44</sup>

In *Adolescence* the brain is constantly pruning unused connections and strengthening (myelinating) used connections.<sup>45</sup> Between 14 and 16 the brain has another increase in weight as connections and used synapses are strengthened. The last part of the brain to mature is the prefrontal cortex (PFC) which is the “executive suite” of the brain governing calibration of risk and reward, problem-solving, prioritizing long term planning and regulation of emotion. The maturation of the PFC is underway in *Adolescence* but is not complete until one’s mid-20s.<sup>46</sup>

It is often during *Adolescence* that youth experiment with drugs and alcohol which can have lasting effects on addiction and brain development.<sup>47</sup> Youth in this age group also are risk-takers and thrill seekers releasing pleasure endorphins in the brain.<sup>48</sup> Finally, many mental health illnesses begin early in life. Half of all cases begin by age 14 and three-quarters by age 24. These include mood disorders, anxiety disorders, substance abuse and schizophrenia.<sup>49</sup>

*Cognition:* According to Piaget, around the ages of 11 or 12 youth begin to be capable of *Formal Operations*. Formal operations include the ability for abstract and hypothetical thinking and a fuller understanding of cause and effect. By the time youth have moved into *Adolescence*, they are beginning to use and practice *Formal Operations*. Youth in the *Formal Operations* stage can make and reject hypothesis based on logic and can begin to calculate or anticipate potential consequences for actions. Youth practicing *Formal Operations* can systematically solve a problem with multiple solutions or courses of action.<sup>50</sup> Adolescents in *Formal Operations* also become capable of insight and introspection.<sup>51</sup>

Around the ages of 15 or 16 studies show that youth are able to come to the same cognitive conclusions and decisions as adults under what is termed “cold cognition.” Cold cognition is when one is presented with a hypothetical situation or a decision that does not stir one emotionally. Under “hot cognition,” such as emotional or physical arousal, adolescents cannot make as good of decisions as adults.<sup>52</sup> Adolescents need time for emotions and reasoning skills to catch up with rapid physical changes.<sup>53</sup>

Adolescents are very susceptible to peer-pressure, emotionality and pleasure seeking that affects decision-making. In addition, because the PFC of the brain is not fully developed, adolescents will

typically underestimate potential risks or consequences, dismiss negative outcomes as improbable, and act impulsively. This gives adolescents a self-perception of invincibility, which further contributes to risk-taking behavior.<sup>54</sup>

*Psychosocial Development:* Around age 12, Erickson identifies a new psychosocial stage lasting until approximately age 18: *Identity vs. Role Confusion*. Social relationships help adolescents to develop a sense of self and personal identity. During this stage of development the individual slowly moves into society as a contributing member. Successes in social groups, skill mastery and competition feed identity whereas failures lead to confusion.<sup>55</sup>

Characteristics of adolescents at this age include withdrawal from one's parents and a desire for privacy. Relationships with parents can range from friendly to hostile. Young adolescents typically want less time with parents and have a large group of friends of the same sex. As youth age they will also often develop friendships with the opposite sex and begin dating. As they vie for independence, adolescents will often feel that parents are too restrictive and overly interested.<sup>56</sup>

Many adolescents worry about failure. They will often act in a way that is moody, self-centered, and impulsive. They will vacillate back and forth between wanting independence and fearing independence.<sup>57</sup> Adolescents also begin to observe the discrepancies between adults' words and actions. They may be disappointed or frustrated when adults stated values and behaviors are incongruent. Adolescents often engage in rule and limit testing.<sup>58</sup>

*Moral Development:* Kohlberg observed that by age 16, most people have internalized society's rules about how to behave. This 4<sup>th</sup> stage of *Conventional* morality is one in which people feel obligated to conform, not any longer to just family and friends, but also to society's laws and customs. They see it as important to do one's duty to maintain social order. Leaders are assumed to be right; individuals adopt social rules without considering the underlying ethical principles involved.<sup>59</sup> This stage of moral development persists usually until at least college and one's mid-20s, according to Kohlberg, though some never progress beyond this stage.

## Quadrant IV: Early Adulthood (19-24)

*Developmental Tasks:* According to Havighurst, the developmental tasks associated with *Early Adulthood* include finding a partner, establishing a career and a home, and starting a family. Young adults in this age group will also be concerned with taking on civic responsibility and finding a peer group.<sup>60</sup>

*Physical Development/Brain Development:* In *Early Adulthood* individuals will reach their full adult height and body shape. EEGs of the brain in young adults show another period of increased activity around age 18 and 19, which is consistent with the cycle of growth observed about every four years.<sup>61</sup> Throughout the 20's used pathways in the brain continue to myelinate and unused pathways continue to be pruned.<sup>62</sup> A 2009 study supports that the brain is at peak cognition between 22 and 27 and gradually declines thereafter.<sup>63</sup> The PFC is the last part of the brain to mature;<sup>64</sup> it is thought to be fully developed around age 25.<sup>65</sup>

*Cognition:* Throughout young adulthood the brain is practicing Formal Operations. There are no additional stages of cognitive development after Formal Operations, according to Piaget.

Brain research shows that in early adulthood, the pathways between the prefrontal cortex and other regions of the brain are stronger, including those associated with emotions and impulses. As such, all regions of the brain become better involved in planning and problem solving. The calibration of risk-rewards, problem solving, prioritizing, self-evaluation, long-term planning and emotional regulation are improved in *Early Adulthood*. It is not to say the capacity does not exist earlier, but it requires a more concerted effort and is less likely to happen before these connections are strengthened.<sup>66</sup>

*Psychosocial Development:* The psychosocial task of young adulthood pertains to *Intimacy vs. Isolation*. The important developmental task is to form intimate, loving arrangements with other people. Also, young adults move to full participation in society with responsibilities and rights. Success leads to strong relationships whereas failure leads to isolation. According to Erickson, the *Intimacy vs. Isolation* stage for young adults lasts until approximately age 40.<sup>67</sup>

Psychosocial researcher Arthur Chickering also studied the development of college students specifically and noted seven "vectors" of development. In the freshman and sophomore years (18 to 20), young adults are focused on developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy towards independence, and developing mature interpersonal relationships. Near the end of this process, young adults establish an identity. According to Chickering, identity is described as "confidence in one's ability to maintain inner sameness and continuity. It involves recognizing one's physical needs and limitations and developing comfort with one's body and appearance, sexual identity and gender."<sup>68</sup>

In the later years of college and into adulthood, young adults are oriented towards developing a purpose and integrity. These stages involve integration of one's values, vocational and non-vocational lifestyle. In Chickering's *Integrity* developmental stage, people internalize values not as a set of standards imposed by others, but as values of their own. Values may shift from absolutes about rule-governed beliefs to ones where social rules may be relative to other factors (see Moral Development).<sup>69</sup>

*Moral Development:* According to Kohlberg, the 5<sup>th</sup> stage of moral development is the first stage of *Postconventional* morality. It may be referred to as the "social contract" stage. Those reaching this stage

recognize the underlying moral purposes that are supposed to be served by laws and social customs. If a law ceases to serve a good purpose, they feel the people in a democracy should get active and change the law. Thought of in this way, democracy becomes a social contract whereby everyone tries continually to create a set of laws that best serves the most people, while protecting the basic rights of everyone.<sup>70</sup>

A 6<sup>th</sup> and final stage of *Postconventional* morality exists in adulthood whereby people have considered many values and have decided on a philosophy of life that truly guides their life. They do not automatically conform to tradition or others' beliefs or even to their own emotions, intuition, or impulsive notions about right and wrong. Sixth stage people carefully choose basic principles to follow, such as caring for and respecting every living thing, feeling that we are all equal and deserve equal opportunities. The guiding philosophy is one of justice for all human beings.<sup>71</sup> They are strong enough to act on their values even if their beliefs are against the law. Kohlberg expressed that a small percentage of persons who reach the 5<sup>th</sup> stage will progress to this final stage of morality in adulthood.<sup>72</sup>

## CLOCK 2: MINNESOTA LAWS, RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH

When making and enforcing rules for children, adolescents and young adults, be them in homes, schools or the community at large, it is important that the expectations of youth are developmentally appropriate. Youth should not be held to standards of behavior or cognition that exceed their developmental capacity. In addition, youth should have opportunities to learn and grow from mistakes without permanent or insurmountable consequences.

States afford and impose many age-based rights and restrictions on youth as they mature. The second Youth Development Clock (page 16), depicts Minnesota statutes, policies and guidelines for youth which exist based on a child's age or level of schooling. The purpose of this model is to be able to compare the laws and expectations placed upon youth and families by the formal systems of the state against where youth are developmentally. In addition, the different rules imposed by different state systems (education, human services, health, juvenile justice and recreation) can be compared against one another for appropriateness.

The laws depicted on the clock are not exhaustive. There are likely additional age-based provisions of the laws, services and programs for families and children. Following the presentation of the clock model is an explanation of the laws and rules in each developmental quadrant.



## Clock 2: Minnesota Statutes, Rules, Programs and Guidelines

Minnesota Dept of Public Safety  
Office of Justice Programs.  
Dana Swayze, MSW . 2013

Age 21: Purchase/consume alcohol; minimum age to hold state and local office; a minor's inheritance may be held by a custodian until 21; must meet asset standards to qualify for MN Medical Assistance; Juvenile Justice jurisdiction over EJJ youth ends; foster care jurisdiction ends; age discrimination in employment does not apply to persons under 21.

Adopted youth may seek birth record information/birth certificate  
Juvenile probation jurisdiction ends @ 19

**Age of Majority (18):** Vote; own property; purchase firearms & possess pistols/semi-autos; enlist in military; purchase tobacco; get married; enter into contracts; tattoos/piercings; gambling; make a will; credit/debt.; adult criminal arrests and prosecutions; special education rights transfer to youth; withdraw from school; purchase pornography.  
**END OF:** Employment restrictions; travel restrictions; curfew/runaway laws; driving restrictions; use of helmets; child support payments.

### MN Adult Criminal Justice System: 18+

**Age 17:** May observe criminal trials; may donate blood; may withdraw from school with parental consent; may enlist in military with parental consent.

**Age 16:** Drivers license with restrictions; marriage with parental consent; age of sexual consent; possess hunting firearm unsupervised; Expanded types of employment w/ more dangerous job duties and longer hours; consent to make anatomical gift; donate blood w/ parental consent; court may order emancipation for CHIPs youth; certain delinquent acts committed by 16 and 17 year olds are presumptive transfer to adult court; may consent to drug and alcohol treatment or mental health institutionalization; may obtain a motorcycle permit

GRAD Testing: Math (11th)  
College/Post-Secondary Applications: 11th  
GRAD Testing: Reading (10th)  
Post-secondary credits available: 10th-12th

Youth over 14 must consent to being adopted

Ages 14 & 15 can hunt or possess firearm with a DNR Safety Certificate

**Age 14:** Age of criminal responsibility: youth may be certified to adult court & sentencing or Extended Juvenile Jurisdiction to age 21: Age of employment with limited hours and job duties; Unsupervised snowmobile/ATV riding: can be held/processed in an adult jail or police facility temporarily; children ages 14 and 15 should not be left home alone more than 24 hours

Affordable Care Act: Youth coverage on parents' medical insurance until age 26

Typical age to rent a car (25)

Prenatal care, parenting and birthing programs

Birth Certificate/Social Security #

Children born in the U.S. are U.S. Citizens regardless of parents' citizenship

WIC Program eligible: Birth to age 5

18 months vaccination series: Immunizations required to attend licensed child care

Public Health Home Nursing Visits, Birth--2yrs

Ages 2-18 eligible for Medical Assistance (MA) if low income

### MN Child Protection System: Birth-21

Early Childhood Family Learning Programs /ECFC: Pre-K

Many Pre-K programs require youth to be toilet trained

Headstart Programs 3 to 5 yrs: "Ready for K" Programs

Early Childhood Development Screenings needed to register for Kindergarten

"Booster" immunizations ages 4-6.

Immunization series needed to enroll in K

### MN Public Education System: 7-21

Compulsory School Attendance: Age 7--1st Grade

Children under age 8 are not to be left home alone

"Reading by 3rd Grade" initiatives

MN Comprehensive Assessment testing (MCAs): 3rd-8th grades

Children under 10 must wear lifejackets in boats

Children under age 10 who commit an illegal act are handled in Child Protection system.

Youth under 10 generally, are competent court witnesses.

Children ages 10-13 may hunt with firearm under parental supervision

Children ages 8 to 10 are not to be left home alone over 3 hours

Children under age 11 should not provide childcare /baby-sit

Children ages 11 to 13 should not be left alone over 12 hours

Parent is responsible to get youth under age 12 to school in truancy situations (educational neglect).

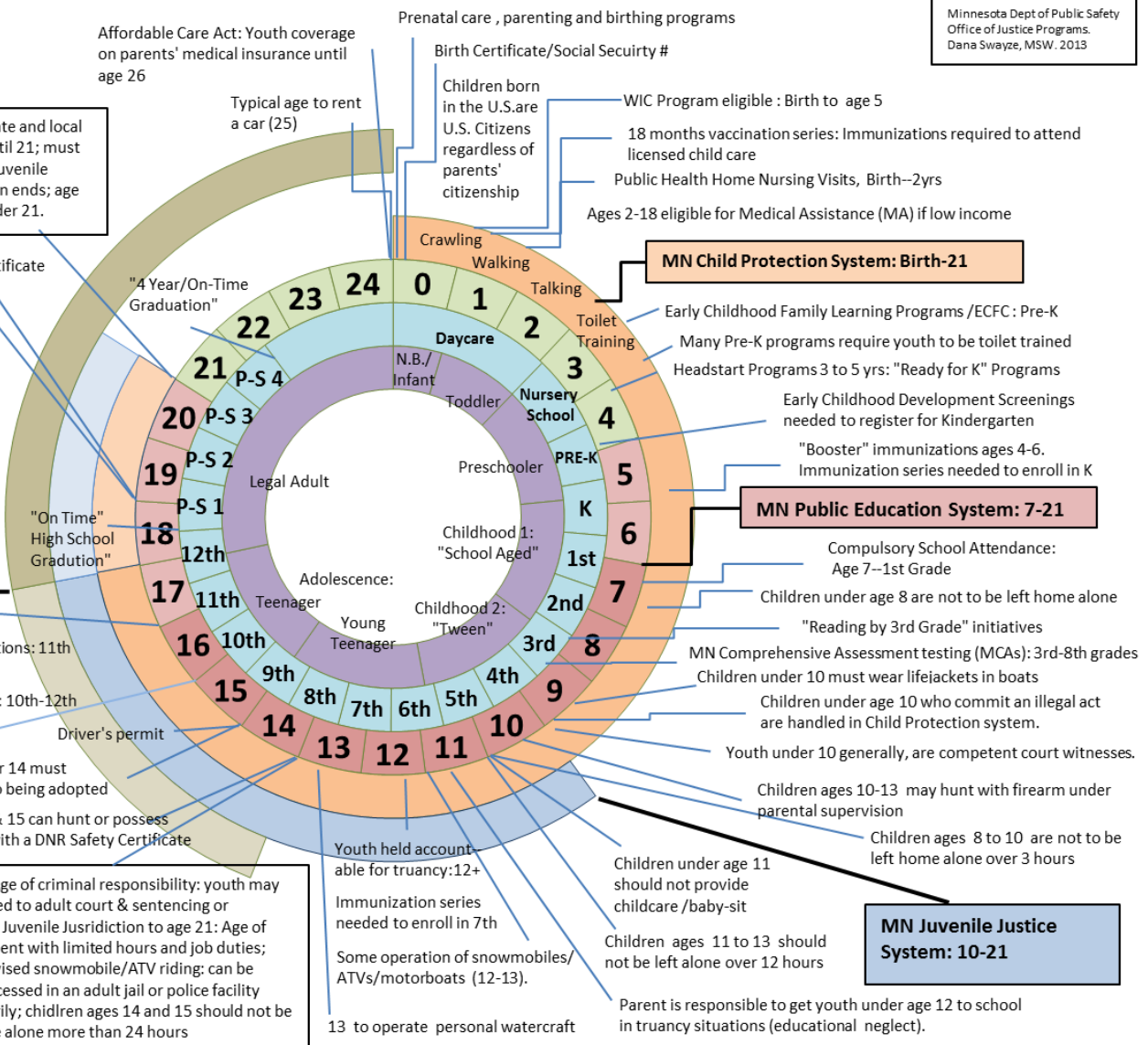
### MN Juvenile Justice System: 10-21

Youth held accountable for truancy: 12+

Immunization series needed to enroll in 7th

Some operation of snowmobiles/ATVs/motorboats (12-13).

13 to operate personal watercraft





## Quadrant I: Infancy and Early Childhood (0-5)

The primary age provisions in Minnesota related to young children are to meet their physical and emotional health and safety. As youth age, additional rules are imposed related to preparing for school participation.

### Health and Safety

State insurance laws require that private medical coverage apply to infants from the moment of birth.<sup>73</sup> Minnesota has a Newborn Screening Program whereby all newborns are tested for 50 heritable and congenital disorders.<sup>74</sup> Also, newborn vision and hearing tests are conducted. These allow for early intervention if disorders are detected.

Minnesota law allows for newborn infants to be left at hospitals or certain health care providers within the first seven days of birth without prosecution of the parents if the child is unwanted or cannot be cared for.<sup>75</sup>

The Minnesota Department of Health publishes a schedule of immunizations that are recommended between birth and 18 months of age. These include the series for Hepatitis A and B; Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (DPT); Polio; Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR); Chickenpox; Rotavirus; and Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib).<sup>76</sup> Immunizations are required to attend licensed childcare in Minnesota if over 2 months old.<sup>77</sup>

Check-ups, immunizations and certain other preventative services must also be provided by insurance companies operating in Minnesota without a copay until children are age 6; immunizations must be provided without copays until children turn age 18.<sup>78</sup>

Health services agencies in Minnesota support the health of women through parenting support and prenatal health and wellness initiatives. Public Health Home Nursing programs visit some new mothers in their home until the child is age 2 to give parents support and guidance in promoting secure attachment, stress management and parenting.<sup>79</sup> Food support is also eligible for some families through the Nutritional Supplement Program until a child is 5 years-old.<sup>80</sup> Federal, state and local level support to new parents and young children is not universal; participants must meet income requirements for eligibility.

Child and Teen Checkups (C&TC) is the name for Minnesota's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Program. C&TC is a comprehensive child health program provided to children and teens from newborn through the age of 20 who are enrolled in Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare.<sup>81</sup>

### Child Protection

State and local human services, social services or child protection agencies have the authority to intervene in the event caregivers are endangering, neglecting or abusing children.<sup>82</sup> Neglect includes

failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care and education.<sup>83</sup> Generally, jurisdiction for child protection investigations or family assessments range from prenatal to age 18.<sup>84</sup>

Child protection statutes have specific age-based provisions prohibiting shaking children under age 3; any striking or non-accidental injury of children under 18 months; and striking any child under age 1 on the head or face.<sup>85</sup> Prenatal provisions of child protection statutes relate to exposing an unborn child to controlled substances or their derivatives for non-medical purposes.<sup>86</sup>

Social services agencies broker myriad support services for families to increase parenting capacity and family strengths. In extreme cases, state and local agencies have the authority to temporarily or permanently remove the child from a caregiver.<sup>87</sup> With regard to non-parental custody, if a child under age 3 has resided for 6 months with an individual not the parent and the parent has lacked consistent participation in the child's life, the caretaker may initiate custody proceedings. The same is true if the child is over age 3 and has lived with the care taker for at least 12 months.<sup>88</sup>

The Minnesota Department of Human Services offers Child Care Assistance to qualifying families. This program assists in paying for child care services while a parent is at work, looking for work or at school. Funds are eligible for care for youth up to age 12 or age 14 if the child has special needs.<sup>89</sup>

## Education

Minnesota Law provides for a free public education for all residents of the state.<sup>90</sup> The minimum age for enrollment in school in Minnesota is 5 for Kindergarten and age 6 for 1<sup>st</sup> grade. The law allows youth to remain in high school until the first September after they turn 21.<sup>91</sup> Federal free appropriate public education laws require that youth with disabilities have access to education between ages 3 and 21.<sup>92</sup> Parents are permitted to homeschool children in Minnesota provided certain performance assessments are completed and reports are made to the superintendent.<sup>93</sup>

Many activities related to children between 3 and 6 years-old are in preparation for learning and school attendance. Minnesota requires that an Early Childhood Screening be completed before a youth may start Kindergarten (or within 30 days of enrollment).<sup>94</sup> The purpose of the ECS is to "identify potential health or developmental problems in infants and young children who may need a health assessment, diagnostic assessment or educational evaluation." At the time youth complete a screening they are also assigned a "MARSS Number" (Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System) which is their unique student ID number that stays with them the entire time they are enrolled in Minnesota Public Schools.<sup>95</sup>

Minnesota statute advises that ECS screenings be completed when a child is between 3 and 4 years-old.<sup>96</sup> At the screening a trained professional screens for vision, hearing, height and weight, immunizations, fine and gross motor skills, thinking, language and communication skills, and social and emotional development.<sup>97</sup> Both the child and the parent are assessed using standardized instruments. Referrals are made to the family to address any issues that arise during the screening. In addition to the Screening Assessment, children must complete their immunization series between the ages of 4 and 6 to enroll in Kindergarten, unless they file a conscientious objection.<sup>98</sup>

Many school readiness programs exist for children but they are predominantly fee-for-service programs. Options for low income families consist of Head Start Programs for children ages 3 to 5 and Early Head Start for mothers, infants and toddlers.<sup>99</sup> In 2013, the Minnesota legislature established funding for free all-day kindergarten for all youth and funding for early childhood education scholarships.<sup>100</sup>

## Citizenship

According to the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the United States Constitution, all children born in the United States are U.S. Citizens.<sup>101</sup> After birth, parents are to receive a copy of the birth certificate from the hospital and families are advised to report the birth to the Social Security Administration so the child can be issued a Social Security Number.<sup>102</sup> While having a Social Security Number is technically voluntary, it is a key piece of identifying information for U.S. citizens.

## Quadrant II: Middle Childhood (6-12)

### Health and Safety

Laws related to children in *Middle Childhood* primarily support their safety. Generally, youth who are ages 8 and under are required to ride in car seats or booster seats,<sup>103</sup> and all minors are required to wear helmets when riding on any motorized vehicles.<sup>104</sup> Children under age 10 must wear a lifejacket at all times while on watercraft.<sup>105</sup>

### Child Protection

All Minnesota child protection laws are in effect for youth in *Middle Childhood*. Minnesota Child Protection Guidelines developed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services for counties suggest that it may be a child protection matter if children under the age of 8 are left home alone. The guidelines further state that youth ages 8 to 10 are not to be left home alone over 3 hours and are not to provide child care for other children. When children turn 11, the guidelines allow that youth may “babysit” or supervise other children. Children ages 11 to 13 are not to be left alone (or supervise other children) for over 12 hours.<sup>106</sup>

Children under the age of 10 in Minnesota are not deemed to be old enough to commit delinquent acts. Youth under age 10 who engage in illegal acts are processed in the child protection system as a Child in Need of Protection or Services (CHIPS).<sup>107</sup>

Generally, youth under age 10 are deemed to be competent witnesses in court in the event they need to testify in a family court or child protection case.<sup>108</sup> Youth under age 12 are allowed to video record their testimony rather than appear in open court.<sup>109</sup> In the event a child is part of a custody proceeding, no specific age is listed to be able to express a custody preference. The judge may ask a child if they have a preference if the judge determines the child to be of a sufficient age to do so.<sup>110</sup>

### Education

Compulsory attendance laws are in effect in Minnesota when a child enrolls in Kindergarten or turns age 7 (1<sup>st</sup> grade). Children are not required to attend Kindergarten but if a parent enrolls a child under age 7 in Kindergarten compulsory attendance laws can apply. A parent may, however, disenroll a child from Kindergarten without violating compulsory attendance laws.<sup>111</sup>

Parents who do not enroll youth in school by age 7 and parents who do not ensure attendance of youth under age 12 can be charged with Educational Neglect.<sup>112</sup> For elementary school aged children, they are a “continuing truant” if they miss three or more days of school without valid excuse.<sup>113</sup> If they are absent seven or more days they are considered a “habitual truant.”<sup>114</sup> The county attorney can prosecute cases where parents or youth refuse to comply with compulsory attendance laws.<sup>115</sup>

Minnesota schools are required by state law to provide transportation free of charge students who live 2 or more miles away from school.<sup>116</sup> Some school districts will offer school bus transportation for all elementary students.

School districts are required to develop codes of conduct that identify rules and minimum consequences for students.<sup>117</sup> All public school students are afforded due process rights prior to suspension, exclusion or expulsion.<sup>118</sup>

A significant education benchmark occurs around 3<sup>rd</sup> grade when children are said to go from “learning to read” to “reading to learn.” Children who fall behind in reading skills and comprehension early have poorer academic outcomes in the long term.<sup>119</sup> Many public and private initiatives are focused on reading by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. In Minnesota, youth experience their first state-level academic testing, the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. MCAs measure reading, math and science proficiency and continue through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, as well as in select years of high school.<sup>120</sup>

In the event a child has special needs, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) must be created to provide instructions and services appropriate to their needs.<sup>121</sup> Children may be given IEPs for specific physical disabilities, learning disabilities, developmental delays, emotional disturbances, conditions such as autism or brain injuries, and speech and language support.<sup>122</sup> Myriad federal and state laws govern the assessment for, creation of, and implementation of IEPs.

## Juvenile Justice

The juvenile justice system differentiates between youth under age 10 who commit illegal acts and youth ages 10 and over.<sup>123</sup> Ten year-olds can be charged with a delinquency matter, appear in juvenile court, be detained in juvenile detention facilities, and be placed on probation. All of the tools and sanctions of the juvenile justice system are available for youth ages 10 and over. Juvenile correctional institutions are licensed to house residents ages 10 to 21.<sup>124</sup> Children under age 14, however, may not be held in a secure adult jail or police facility in Minnesota for any length of time.<sup>125</sup>

Youth involved in the juvenile justice system have the right to a public defender if they are charged with a misdemeanor level offense or higher. Youth are permitted to waive their right to counsel, at which time standby counsel is appointed for gross misdemeanor and felony level offenses. In determining of a youth has “knowingly and voluntarily” waived counsel, the court is to look at the totality of the circumstances “including but not limited to the child's age, maturity, intelligence, education, experience, ability to comprehend, and the presence of the child's parents, legal guardian, legal custodian or guardian ad litem.”<sup>126</sup>

## Recreation

Youth who are ages 10 or 11 may hunt large game with a firearm or by archery in Minnesota but must be under the direct supervision and within immediate reach of a parent or guardian. Youth ages 9 and under may hunt for small game and wild turkey if under the direct supervision of a parent or guardian.<sup>127</sup>

While not a state or federal law, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPPOA) designates some films as PG-13 such that parental guidance is suggested for youth under age 13 in acknowledgement of developmental appropriateness. According to the MPPOA, any drug use will initially require at least a PG-13 rating. More than brief nudity will require at least a PG-13 rating, but such nudity in a PG-13 rated motion picture generally will not be sexually oriented. There may be depictions of violence in a PG-13 movie, but generally not both realistic and extreme or persistent violence. A motion picture's single use

of one of the harsher sexually-derived words, though only as an expletive, initially requires at least a PG-13 rating.<sup>128</sup>

## Employment

The earliest age for employment in Minnesota is 11 years old. Under Minnesota statute, youth between the ages of 11 and 13 can be employed as paper carriers, youth athletic referees, actors, performers or models. Youth may not work during school hours on school days. Youth who are working for their parents, in their home (chores) or providing babysitting are not subject to the same hour restrictions that apply to other child workers.<sup>129</sup>

## Quadrant III: Adolescence (13-18)

### Health and Safety

As children age, more aspects of health delivery are within their control, though parental consent is required for most services. Medical, dental, mental and other health care services may be provided to a minor without parental consent if it is deemed a medical emergency by a professional and treatment should be given without delay.<sup>130</sup> Minors who live apart from their parents and are financially independent may consent to health care services.<sup>131</sup> Any minor who gives effective legal consent can be held financially responsible for costs associated with treatment.<sup>132</sup>

As it relates to the education system, additional immunizations are required for youth to enroll in 7<sup>th</sup> grade (age 11 or 12) in Minnesota.<sup>133</sup>

Minnesota law allows minors who are 16 or older may give an anatomical gift (typically in conjunction with obtaining a driver's license and designating the desire to be a donor). However, if a minor dies a parent may override both the request to, or refusal to, make an anatomical gift.<sup>134</sup> Sixteen year-olds may donate blood with parental consent and 17 year-olds may donate blood without parental consent.<sup>135</sup>

Generally, parents may access a child's medical records unless the minor is emancipated, married, has borne a child or the minor sought treatment for pregnancy, venereal disease, Hepatitis B vaccine, or drug or alcohol treatment.<sup>136</sup>

Any minor who is married or has borne a child may consent to health services for the minor child.<sup>137</sup> Minors may seek an abortion in Minnesota. The minor must notify both parents of the intended abortion and wait 48 hours, or seek judicial approval for the abortion without notification.<sup>138</sup>

Minors may consent to treatment for medical mental or other health services to determine the presence of or treat pregnancy, venereal disease or drug or alcohol abuse.<sup>139</sup> Any person age 16 or over may consent to hospitalization or institutional treatment for mental illness or chemical dependency. Conversely, if a 16 or 17 year old refuses treatment, a parent may consent on their behalf despite the minor's refusal.<sup>140</sup>

In June 2013, the FDA approved Plan B, an over-the-counter pill that prevents ovulation for persons who had unprotected sex or where they know birth control has failed (ie. condom failure). The Plan B or "morning after" pill hormonally reduces the potential for ovulation/pregnancy if taken within 3 days of unprotected sex. The Plan B pill was previously available to those 17 and older without a prescription and those 16 and under with a prescription. The Plan B pill is now available without prescription to all persons of reproductive age without age or point of sale restrictions.<sup>141</sup>

## Child Protection

All Minnesota child protection laws are in effect for adolescents until age 18. According to Child Protections Guidelines, youth ages 14 and 15 may be left home alone for up to 24 hours. Youth ages 16 and 17 may be left alone for over 24 hours provided there is a plan in place regarding how to respond to an emergency.<sup>142</sup>

The child neglect and endangerment statute has a specific provision for adults who intentionally or recklessly cause a child under age 14 to be placed in a situation to substantially harm or cause death to the youth by access to a loaded firearm.<sup>143</sup> Criminal law has a provision against leaving a loaded firearm where a minor under 18 is likely to gain access.<sup>144</sup>

As of 2013, youth under age 18 who engage in prostitution and are considered victims of crime and are not charged as delinquents; they are termed “sexually exploited youth” and are served under child protection statutes.<sup>145</sup>

Special protections are in place for youth under the age of 13 in Minnesota as it relates to sexual contact. An actor who has certain sexual contact with a child under the age of 13 and is at least 36 months (3 years) older than the victim is guilty of 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree Criminal Sexual Contact (CSC). First or Second Degree CSC also applies if the victim is between the ages of 13 and 16, and the actor is at least 48 months (2 years) older than the victim *and* is in a position of authority.<sup>146</sup>

Additional provisions of CSC in Minnesota apply when a youth is at least 16 but less than 18. If the actor is more than 4 years older than the complainant *and* in a position of authority over the complainant, it is 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree CSC even if the complainant consents.<sup>147</sup> Minnesota Statute also prohibits persons over 18 from soliciting children to engage in sexual conduct. In this statute a child is defined as a person 15 years of age or younger.<sup>148</sup> While not stated explicitly, Minnesota CSC laws by de facto imply that youth under age 16 cannot consent to sexual contact.

In 2014, minors who engage in prostitution will be considered victims of a crime, rather than perpetrators of delinquency under Minnesota’s new “Safe Harbor” legislation for victims of human trafficking.<sup>149</sup>

Youth ages 14 and over must give their consent to be adopted<sup>150</sup> and youth ages 14 and over can object to guardians a parent selects in the event of the parents’ death.<sup>151</sup>

In the event a parent is paying child support, payment obligations stop when a child turns 18. Payments are required, however, if the youth is under age 20 if still attending secondary school.<sup>152</sup>

## Education

When youth turn 12 (around 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade) Minnesota statute presumes that youth are capable and responsible for getting themselves to school. Youth under age 12 who are truant are considered to be experiencing educational neglect whereas youth ages 12 and over can be held accountable to attendance standards by the juvenile court.<sup>153</sup>



Youth in middle school, junior high school or high school are considered “continuing truants” if they miss 3 or more class periods on 3 or more days.<sup>154</sup> These youth are “habitual truants” if they miss one or more class periods on seven school days without lawful excuse.<sup>155</sup> Habitual truants can be referred to the county attorney or social services for intervention or prosecution.<sup>156</sup>

Youth ages 11 to 13 continue to take Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment testing. Youth in 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade take Minnesota GRAD standards tests in writing proficiency, reading and math which are necessary for high school graduation.<sup>157</sup> Sixteen and 17 year-olds are also often taking post-secondary credits, international baccalaureate (IB) and advanced placement (AP) testing for college as well as the Standardized Achievement Test (SAT) and American College Testing (ACT) standardized tests.

As of the 2013-2014 school year, youth age 17 can drop out of school with a parent’s signed consent (previously youth could sign-out of school with parental consent at age 16).<sup>158</sup>

## Juvenile Justice

Many laws and local ordinances apply to youth under age 18 that become especially relevant for youth during adolescence. Generally youth under 18 are prohibited from purchasing, possessing or using tobacco,<sup>159</sup> pornography,<sup>160</sup> fireworks,<sup>161</sup> handguns and other weapons.<sup>162</sup> Youth under age 18 cannot engage in gambling or bookmaking;<sup>163</sup> run away from home,<sup>164</sup> get tattoos or certain piercings,<sup>165</sup> or be out past curfew.<sup>166</sup> Many of these are considered petty offenses which result in citations or diversion programs for youth.

In Minnesota, 14 is the age of criminal responsibility.<sup>167</sup> Youth age 14 and over who commit felony level acts can be certified to criminal court for adult prosecution.<sup>168</sup> Age 14 is also the minimum age to receive an Extended Juvenile Jurisdiction (EJJ) adjudication which keeps youth in the juvenile justice system until they are 21. In these cases, an adult sentence is also “stayed” meaning it can be implemented if a youth’s EJJ status is revoked because of a new offense or supervision violations.<sup>169</sup>

State statute allows youth as young as 14 to be detained in adult facilities if they are pending “Certification” as an adult. Minnesota statute also allows for the temporary holding of youth ages 14 and over in an adult jail or police lockup for juvenile delinquency matters provided they are sight and sound separated from adult inmates.<sup>170</sup>

Certain serious criminal acts committed by 16 and 17 years old are presumed to be transferred to adult court for trial and disposition. Youth ages 16 and over are automatically transferred to adult court for prosecution for 1<sup>st</sup> Degree Murder charges.<sup>171</sup> Court proceedings of juveniles charged with a felony level offense are open to the public if the youth is age 16 or older.<sup>172</sup>

For youth who commit felony level offenses, those adjudications affect sentencing if they continue to offend in adulthood. Two or more felony adjudications as a juvenile equal one adult criminal history point for sentencing purposes.<sup>173</sup>

Under Minnesota statute, school superintendents are to be notified if a youth is found delinquent related to crimes occurring on school property a certain set of person offenses, weapons offenses and controlled substance offenses even if they do not occur on school property.<sup>174</sup>

## Employment

When youth turn 12 in Minnesota, they may be employed in agricultural labor.<sup>175</sup> When a youth is at least 15 and obtains an instructional driver's permit, he or she may get a Farm Work License to operate a motor vehicle in the performance of farm related work.<sup>176</sup>

Fourteen is the age of employment in Minnesota to get a formal payroll job. Youth under age 16 may not work during school hours before 7 a.m. or after 9 p.m. on any day. During the school year federal law restricts minors under 16 to 3 hours on school days and no more than 18 hours per week.<sup>177</sup> The maximum number of hours per week for youth under 16 is 40 with no more than 8 hours in one 24 hour period. Statute also protects youth under 16 from working in hazardous conditions.<sup>178</sup>

When youth turn 16 they can work earlier and later in the day and have more dangerous job duties.<sup>179</sup> Employers that are not subject to federal minimum wage laws may pay a minor less than minimum wage (\$4.90/hr.) for their first 90 consecutive days of employment.<sup>180</sup> Also, a parent may request a minor's wages by notifying the employer.<sup>181</sup>

## Recreation

Youth ages 11 to 13 can continue to hunt large game with firearms or by archery under direct parental supervision. Once age 12 the parent no longer needs to be within immediate reach of the youth. Youth ages 14 and over can hunt unsupervised provided they have a hunting license and a Firearms Safety Certificate from the DNR.<sup>182</sup>

In Minnesota, 13 is the minimum age to operate a personalized watercraft provided youth must possess a Watercraft Operator's Permit. Youth under age 12 can operate a motorboat of 25 h.p. or less, or a 25 to 75 h.p. motor with an adult age 21 or older on board. Youth under age 12 cannot operate a boat larger than 75 h.p. even with an adult present. Youth ages 12 and over can operate any size motorboat over 25 h.p. if they have a Watercraft Operators Permit or an adult over 21 on board.<sup>183</sup>

All-terrain vehicles (ATVs), off highway motorcycles (OHM) and snowmobiles have many different age classifications depending on the size of the machine and whether riding on public or private property. Generally, youth ages 12 to 15 can operate these vehicles with adult supervision and a safety certificate; youth ages 16 and 17 can operate these machines without supervision provided they have completed DNR safety certificate courses.<sup>184, 185</sup>

When youth turn 15, they are eligible to take a driver's instruction permit test in Minnesota and practice driving with a licensed driver over age 21.<sup>186</sup> At age 16, youth can be issued a provisional license which comes with night driving restrictions, number of passenger restrictions, and use of cell phone restrictions until youth turn 18.<sup>187</sup> Youth age 15 may obtain a motorized bicycle permit; youth may obtain a motorcycle permit at age 16.<sup>188, 189</sup>

The Motion Picture Association of America designates certain films as "Restricted" meaning youth ages 16 or under cannot view them without a parent or adult guardian. These films "may include adult themes, adult activity, hard language, intense or persistent violence, sexually-oriented nudity, drug abuse or other elements."<sup>190</sup> The MPAA also has some films designated NC-17 where persons under age 18 may not view them regardless of parental consent.

## Citizenship

Youth are permitted to get married in Minnesota at age 16 with parental consent.<sup>191</sup> Some U.S. military service allows enlistment at age 17 with parental consent.<sup>192</sup> Youth ages 17 are also permitted to attend adult criminal trials in Minnesota.<sup>193</sup>

In Minnesota, creditors may not knowingly offer or provide credit to a minor except at the request of the parent or guardian.<sup>194</sup>

While not related to citizenship or laws of the state, many religions and cultures have rights of passage that occur in adolescence. Included are Jewish Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, Christian Confirmation, and traditions such as quinceaneras, debutantes/cotillions or Vision Quests, to name a few. These traditions often symbolize full acceptance into a faith or entry into full participation in a society.

## Quadrant IV: Early Adulthood (19-24)

As youth enter Early Adulthood in Minnesota, they have received most of the rights and privileges associated with majority status.

### Health and Safety

When youth reach the age of majority, they may assume responsibility for their own health care and treatment needs. Their records can also be kept private from their parents or guardians. Those 18 and over may obtain piercings and tattoos and they may purchase and use tobacco. Once youth are 18 they are no longer required to wear helmets when operating recreational vehicles or motorcycles. Persons age 21 and over can buy and consume alcohol.<sup>195</sup>

Young adults can remain on MinnesotaCare insurance until age 21 without having to show income eligibility.<sup>196</sup> Under the federal Affordable Care Act, youth can remain on their parent's medical insurance coverage until they are 26.<sup>197</sup>

### Education

Minnesota law provides for free-public secondary education through age 20.<sup>198</sup> There is no requirement for the state to provide free post-secondary education. While not required, many young adults continue to pursue academic or occupational training by attending post-secondary educational institutions. For minors receiving Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) benefits for their children, they must remain in school to continue to be eligible. They are considered a minor if they are 19 and still attending secondary school or full-time vocational training through a secondary school.<sup>199</sup>

The Minnesota Department of Education does have an Adult Basic Education (ABE) unit which provides no cost education to adults who are at least 19 years old and not enrolled in high school. These adults can make progress towards a GED (graduation equivalency) diploma and receive support for English language learners, literacy and civics.<sup>200</sup>

For many young adults, age 18 may be the first time they will attempt to live away from their parents and meet their own financial obligations. It is not uncommon for parents to co-sign for credit and loans so that young adults who lack a credit history may pay for schooling, housing or transportation. Many post-secondary students obtain federal student loans, payments on which begin within 6 months of graduation or if students leave school or drop below half-time enrollment.<sup>201</sup>

### Child Protection

Services for those under the care or jurisdiction of the child protection system typically end when a youth turns 18. Some young adults can remain in foster care until they are 21.<sup>202</sup> For homeless youth and youth at risk of homelessness, programs and services under the Minnesota Runaway and Homeless Youth Act apply to those ages 21 and under.<sup>203</sup>

Child support payments are discontinued when a child turns 18 unless the child is 19 or 20 and still in secondary school, or if the youth is incapable of self-support due to a physical or mental health condition.<sup>204</sup>

When youth are 19 years old in Minnesota they may request information about their birth parents or birth certificate if they were adopted.<sup>205</sup>

## Juvenile and Criminal Justice

Jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system typically ends when youth turn age 18.<sup>206</sup> Because youth can commit delinquent acts when 17 years-old, Minnesota statute allows for 18 year-olds to remain on juvenile probation to complete sanctions or conditions until they turn 19.<sup>207</sup> Youth who have been adjudicated EJJ remain under the supervision of the juvenile court until they turn 21.<sup>208</sup>

Juvenile adjudication and stay of adjudication records are kept until age 28; participation in juvenile diversion and continuance for dismissal are destroyed at age 21. If one continues to offend after age 18, juvenile records may be kept longer.<sup>209</sup>

All new crimes committed after youth turn 18 years-old are processed in the adult (criminal) justice system and are subject to adult sanctions, sentencing guidelines and supervision. Certain statutes no longer apply once youth turn 18 including tobacco laws; curfew ordinances; fireworks possession; runaway laws; driving restrictions; gambling laws; purchase and possession of handguns; purchase and possession of pornography; tattooing and piercing laws.

## Employment

Once age 18, most restrictions on employment end including: restrictions on the number of hours worked, overtime, and day of the week and time restrictions. Generally the prohibitions against operating machinery and other dangerous job duties as defined by the Commissioner of Labor and Industry are lifted at age 18.

Minnesota allows for differentiated job duties by age and, as such persons under 21 cannot sue for age-based employment discrimination.<sup>210</sup>

## Citizenship

Persons age 18 and over can vote in local, state and federal elections.<sup>211</sup> When young adults turn 21 they are able to hold political office in Minnesota with the exception of governor for which one must be 25 years old.<sup>212</sup> Persons age 18 and over can also enlist in the United States military or the National Guard without parental consent.<sup>213</sup>

Persons age 18 and over in Minnesota can choose where they wish to reside,<sup>214</sup> can marry,<sup>215</sup> can own motor vehicles<sup>216</sup> and other property, enter into contracts and make a will.<sup>217</sup> In the event a minor had an inheritance, it may be held in trust by a custodian until the person turn 21.<sup>218</sup> International travel restrictions requiring parental consent are typically lifted at age 18.

# UNINTENDED OUTCOMES

Minnesota makes many legal provisions for youth of different ages in an attempt to keep youth safe and healthy, as well as to provide an education and afford opportunities for work and citizenship. Choices made by families, children and adolescents can have lasting consequences as youth transition into adulthood. The following are a sample of unintended outcomes (sometimes called collateral consequences) that youth may experience based on the four developmental quadrants presented in the report:

## Infancy and Early Childhood:

- Unintended outcomes or obstacles for youth can occur when birth certificates are not retained or if the parents do not report the birth to the Social Services Administration (especially if parents are undocumented). The youth may not have the identification or Social Security Number needed for state-based identification; opening bank accounts; receiving certain government services; obtaining medical coverage; securing employment, or proving citizenship for work or travel.<sup>219</sup> Procuring these documents later in life can be challenging for families that are highly mobile or youth who are disconnected from their birth family or social history. Immigrants and refugees may also have issues with maintaining or procuring original identifying documents.
- Families that do not keep up with immunizations or who conscientiously object may have difficulty enrolling their youth in licensed childcare programs or Kindergarten in Minnesota. Also, families that do not know how to access public medical insurance options or who do not meet income eligibility may not be able to afford preventative immunizations and other routine preventative care.
- Many child-care and education settings require that youth be toilet trained. Children who are developmentally delayed in this regard may miss early learning and socialization opportunities. Also, child-care before Kindergarten operates on a fee-for-service basis. Families may not be able to afford quality or licensed child care. As of 2012, the statewide average cost of childcare for an infant in Minnesota was just over \$267.00 per week in a childcare center and \$150 per week in a family setting.<sup>220</sup> This averages to between \$600 and \$1,068 per month per child. As a result, children may not be able to access high-quality early childhood care.
- Parents who are unaware of the early childhood screening required for Kindergarten enrollment may miss important deadlines. Minnesota has many immigrant communities and English language learners who may require additional support in learning laws related to school enrollment.
- Early childhood trauma, abuse and neglect are connected to attachment issues, post-traumatic stress disorder, mental illness, chemical dependency, depression and anxiety in youth and adulthood. Youth who have experienced violence, homelessness, death of parents or caregivers, food insecurity and myriad other problems can develop maladaptive coping

strategies affecting school success and social connections. Families need access to mental health services specifically designed for children.

## **Middle Childhood:**

- In Minnesota, children ages 10 and 11 can have a delinquent offense on their juvenile record before brain development research supports that formal cognitive operations begin. Child protective services may better meet the needs of children and families who have early emergence of delinquent behavior than the juvenile justice system. In addition, few other responsibilities or rights for children begin at age 10, making this provision inconsistent with practices in other areas of youth law.
- Disciplinary incidents in school at a young age can set a precedent for future school related issues. In 2011-2012, the Minnesota Department of Education documented 8,907 incidents where students in grades K-5 were suspended from school for one day or more.<sup>221</sup> A student's disciplinary record accompanies them if they changing school settings in Minnesota.<sup>222</sup> Alternatives to suspension are beneficial to keeping children engaged in and attached to school.
- Special education services are intended to provide specific learning support and goals for students with disabilities. Racial disparities in educational attainment and in special education services have been observed in Minnesota. In 2013, American Indian and Black or African American students in Minnesota received the Emotional Behavioral Disorder (EBD) designation as the second most-common IEP disability named after a Specific Learning Disability (SLD).<sup>223</sup>
- While childcare costs are cheaper as children age, the state average is still between \$492 and \$728 per month, per child.<sup>224</sup> Families without adequate resources may leave children home alone or in the care of other children before it is advisable.

## **Adolescence:**

- Older students are more likely to commit acts which warrant suspension and expulsion from school. In 2011-2012 school year, over 17,800 disciplinary incidents resulting in suspension or expulsion were documented for youth in 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade and over 22,800 were documented for youth in 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade.<sup>225</sup> Suspension and expulsions remain on students' academic records and can impact school engagement and learning. Alternatives to suspension and positive youth behavior supports are best practices in maintaining school engagement for adolescents.<sup>226</sup>
- Youth who have limited engagement with school can develop a pattern of chronic truancy or elect to drop-out of school. Lack of a high school diploma or GED can limit job eligibility and earning potential for youth early in life.
- Youth ages 15 to 17 have the second highest volume of arrest of any age group.<sup>227</sup> Involvement in the justice system as a youth can affect employment, student loans, housing and military service. Serious offenders may have open court proceedings or be certified as an adult

transferring their cases and sanctions to adult court. Transfer to adult court begins at age 14 in Minnesota when cognitive research shows that youth do not have the decision-making capacity of adults until 15 or 16, and then only under “cold cognition” situations where there is no emotional arousal.

- Many mental health issues present in adolescence including drug and alcohol use and abuse, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and suicidal thoughts and ideation. When these issues are self-medicated or unmanaged they can affect youth behavior and success in many arenas. A lack of mental health resources for adolescents can disrupt life goals and increase the likelihood of problems continuing unmanaged into adulthood.<sup>228</sup>
- As an age group, adolescents are prone to risk-taking behaviors. Minnesota injury data illustrates that over 27,500 hospital admissions occurred for youth ages 15 to 19 in 2012. This is the second highest number in any age group. This age group also has the highest number of self-inflicted injuries of any age group. Recklessness and risk-taking can result in harm to self and others.
- Adolescents often begin dating and becoming sexually active. Youth can contract sexually transmitted diseases and become pregnant before it is socially acceptable. Adolescents are often not prepared to meet the financial, social and emotional challenges of parenting without assistance. Sexuality should be acknowledged as a normal, healthy part of adolescent development. Youth need accurate information about reproductive health and resources to prevent unintended pregnancy and STD transmission.
- Minnesota uses standardized tests to determine if youth meet the minimum standards for graduation. While all students should possess sufficient knowledge and skills to graduate, inequities in the education system should be addressed to ensure equitable graduation outcomes for all racial groups. Some populations of color are considerably less likely to graduate compared to White students.<sup>229</sup>
- Youth as young as 16 are able to marry with their parent’s consent. Other “life-long” decisions for youth are typically restricted to age 18. In 2003, the most recent year for which marriages by age of the bride and groom are published, females under age 18 were more likely to be married than males under age 18 (90 and 32, respectively).<sup>230</sup>

## Early Adulthood:

- As youth mature they are likely to move into a parenting role. In 2010, 6 percent of babies born in Minnesota were to mothers ages 19 or under. An additional 18.7 percent were born to mothers ages 20 to 24. In total, approximately one-quarter of all births in Minnesota are to mothers age 24 or under.<sup>231</sup> In 2009, births to unmarried mothers age 24 or under were more prevalent than births to married mothers age 24 or under.<sup>232</sup> Young parents, especially those who may be raising children on their own need support and are less likely to go on to higher education or into the workforce.



- Once youth turn 18 years-old they are inundated with offers for credit. Young adults can easily underestimate the difficulty of repaying debt that can have long-lasting effects on their credit rating well into adulthood. Adults can be repaying student loans for many years after completing school or if they withdraw from school.
- Young adults ages 18 and over can have criminal offenses on their permanent record that may affect their ability to get housing and employment. Persons ages 18 to 20 have the greatest volume of arrests in Minnesota.<sup>233</sup> Felony level offenses can affect the ability to vote until all conditions and supervision periods are completed. The internet has made both public and private data more available to a wider audience.
- Young adults ages 21 and over may purchase and consume alcohol, an age provision that is inconsistent with other majority privileges in the state. It is culturally prevalent in Minnesota for persons to begin drinking illegally before 21. In 2012, Minnesota law enforcement recorded over 16,000 arrests or citations for liquor law violations or DUI for youth under age 21.<sup>234</sup> Also, in 2010, over half of high school seniors reported drinking in the past year in Minnesota.<sup>235</sup>
- According to a study by Pfizer, young working adults (ages 18-24) in the United States are the most uninsured population (29%) because the jobs do not offer insurance, it is too expensive, they do not work enough hours or long enough to qualify.<sup>236</sup> According to the Minnesota Injury Data System, persons ages 20 to 24 had the most admissions to hospitals in 2013 of any four-year age grouping (29,886).<sup>237</sup>

# CONCLUSIONS

The following are key concepts to keep in mind when developing laws, policies, programs and consequences for youth behavior:

1. Nearly all models of youth development acknowledge key transitions beginning around ages 11 or 12. Physically youth are entering puberty; cognitively youth transition to *Formal Operations* allowing for increased reasoning and problem-solving capacity and self-regulation; and youth transition into *Conventional* morality. Laws or rules that hold youth under this age accountable for high-level decision-making skills or consideration of consequences may not be developmentally appropriate.
2. Research shows that the human brain is not fully developed until one's mid 20s and that the last part of the brain to develop is the prefrontal cortex governing executive operations. The earliest adolescents are observed to have adult decision-making capacity is 15 or 16 years old, and then only under conditions of no arousal. While youth in adolescence and early adulthood have the ability to think critically about problems or choices, they are merely practicing skills that are not yet fully developed.
3. Youth who make mistakes need the opportunity for learning, reparation and maturation. Consequences for choices made in adolescence and young adulthood should not permanently stigmatize individuals as they mature into adulthood. Persons need opportunities to complete consequences without collateral effects that unduly limit future success or opportunity.
4. The models of development presented included in this report presume a typical trajectory. Children who experience physical or cognitive delays are not likely to meet developmental milestones at the same time as their peers. Abuse, neglect, trauma, exposure to violence or substance abuse can compromise children's abilities to develop healthy attachments and social-emotional skills. Children involved in the child protection and juvenile justice system are more likely to have adverse conditions in their histories.
5. Laws, policies and rules need to be considered in relationship to one another and to developmental theory for consistency across youth governing systems and agencies. Experts in the field of child development should be included in the creation of all laws and policies related to youth to ensure developmentally appropriate expectations and consequences are placed upon youth.
6. Youth and families need support across all four developmental stages described in this report. While early childhood development is especially important for a healthy start to life and a strong emotional base, older children, adolescents and even young adults all have important developmental tasks. After 18 or in some cases 21, young adults are "on their own." Public and private funders and initiatives should strive to support all levels of youth development and fill service gaps and needs to promote holistically sound adults.

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